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SECTION 300.00 – SOLICITATION AND SELECTION

SECTION 310.00 – QUALIFICATION-BASED SELECTION

Qualification-based selection procedures for professional services allow all interested parties an equitable opportunity to present their credentials for consideration. Selection of professional service firms must follow federal guidelines when the services involve federal funds. State-funded agreements generally follow the same procedures as federally funded agreements and must conform to state statutes and fiscal controls.

SECTION 320 .00 – OBTAINING CONSULTANT SERVICES

An [ITD-2760](#), Request for Consultant Services, must be completed and sent to the Consultant Administration Unit (CAU) to begin the process. (See [Section 900](#), Forms) The requesting party should also provide project information, a brief scope of work, and an estimated cost of the services. An approved concept is generally required prior to utilizing consultant services, unless the requested services include development of the concept. Approved funding may be identified by attaching a copy of an [ITD-2101](#), Project Authorization and Agreement.

SECTION 330.00 – MASTER LIST

The department maintains a Master List of consultants who have indicated that they are interested in providing services.

All firms that seek work from the department are asked to submit a completed registration form with information about their services, at which time they will be placed on the Master List.

Through the internet, the Department provides electronic registration for the Master List to ensure that qualified in- and out-of-state consultants are given opportunities to be considered for the award of a contract. The CAU web address is: <http://www.itd.idaho.gov/design/cau/cau.htm>.

To ensure that the Master List is up to date, the consultants are periodically requested to update their information on file. For a current copy of any of the above-mentioned lists, contact the CAU.

SECTION 340.00 – CONSULTANT SELECTION METHODS

Consultant selection is based on one of the following:

- A. Full Solicitation (Statement of Interest, Technical Proposals from the top firms, and Interviews)
- B. Technical Proposals and Interviews of the top rated firms
- C. Technical Proposals only.

Selection Committee

A Selection Committee is used for individual project solicitation and selection. The Consultant Administration Engineer (CAE), or a designated representative, serves as Chairman with at least one representative from the requesting District or Section, a subject matter expert not from the requesting District or Section, and usually an Area Engineer in the Roadway Design Section. Another person may be substituted for the Area Engineer if special expertise is required. When appropriate, representatives from other sections should be invited and encouraged to attend the negotiations.

The list of Committee members should be attached to the ITD-2760, Request for Consultant Services.

Civil Rights Notification

The EEO/Affirmative Action Officer (EEO/AAO) should be notified of Selection Committee meetings. The EEO/AAO is available to advise the Committee and can elect to monitor activities of the Committee to ensure that the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 are met.

A. Full Solicitation Procedures

Statement of Interest

In the Statement of Interest (SOI), the consultants demonstrate their ability, experience and qualifications to perform a specific type of work. The SOI is prepared and is posted on the CAU Web page. In some instances, consultants are notified by mail through the use of the Master List.

The rating criteria should address such items as:

- Experience in the area of work being solicited.
- Location where the work will be performed.
- References (preferably clients from the same type of work).
- Proposed Method and Approach
- Key Personnel.
- Sub consultants.
- Availability of Manpower
- Quality Control
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) utilization commitment.

In addition to these items, the SOI should include Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Programs, method of payment (lump sum, cost plus fixed fee, etc.), weighting factors, deadline for returning the SOI, number of copies of the SOI to submit, and the name of the agreement administrator.

Evaluation Criteria

Prior to the Proposal Review and/or Selection meeting, an evaluation form is prepared based on the proposal criteria. (See [Section 1000](#), Samples, for a sample evaluation sheet.) The proposal evaluation criteria are a working tool to establish a basis of discussion for the committee.

Proposal Review

When the SOIs are received by the CAU, they are screened to assure that they comply with the requirements of the solicitation. A copy is then distributed to the Selection Committee members for review and rating. The Committee then meets to evaluate the ratings. Each proposal is reviewed and discussed. The Chairman builds a consensus among the Committee to recommend a consultant short list or a consultant selection. Although a consensus is desirable, the majority vote shall rule.

The evaluation rating sheets are finalized, signed by the Committee members, and tallied. Draft ratings are often revised after thorough consideration and discussion by the Committee. The evaluation rating sheets should show the crossed-out draft data and the entry of the new rating, thus leaving an audit trail.

Consultant Short List

The Committee then recommends a consultant short list. Due to the high cost of preparation of proposals and interviews, the short list should be limited to the top three firms who will submit Technical Proposals

and/or Interviews. If only two firms have a realistic chance of winning the selection, then the short list should be limited to two firms. If only one firm has a realistic chance to be selected, then selection should be made and a recommendation given to the Assistant Chief Engineer – Development. The additional time and cost to all parties by soliciting for Technical Proposals and conducting interviews should not be incurred.

Technical Proposal Request Notification

Once consultants are chosen to submit a Technical Proposal (RFP), they should visit the project site and obtain actual project specifics. In the proposal, they must demonstrate their ability to perform the specific project. The RFP will contain technical and desired criteria for performance of the work to be done. Typical rating criteria are:

- Scope of Work
- Critical Path Diagram
- Milestones
- Availability of Manpower

In addition, the RFP should address weighting factors, deadline for returning the RFP, number of copies of the RFP to submit, and re-address DBE commitment requirements.

Proposal Review

When the proposals are received by the CAU, they are screened to assure that they comply with the requirements of the RFP. A copy is then distributed to the Selection Committee members for review and rating. The Committee then meets to evaluate the ratings. Each proposal is reviewed and discussed. The Chairman builds a consensus among the Committee to recommend a consultant selection or to hold interviews.

The evaluation rating sheets are finalized, signed by the Committee members, and tallied. Draft ratings are often revised after thorough consideration and discussion by the Committee. The evaluation rating sheets should show the crossed-out draft data and the entry of the new rating, thus leaving an audit trail.

Interviews

Interviews allow the Department a first hand opportunity to ascertain the consultant's ability to perform a specific project. The interview format should be approximately one hour long, with the first thirty minutes for consultant presentations and the second thirty minutes for questions and answers. Scheduling an extra twenty to thirty minutes between interviews allows adequate time for set up of the next consultant firm. Other formats may be used, but need to be coordinated with the CAU.

To maintain consistency of information prior to the interview, the Committee Chairman should be the only Department contact to the short-listed consultants. The Chairman cannot divulge information from other firms, but should let the firms know any information the Department has of record that is pertinent to the project. On a case-by-case basis, the Chairman may direct the consultant to other committee members or Department employees who possess expertise appropriate to the project.

During the interviews, the same set of questions is used for each consultant, and the Committee members rate each consultant. After the interviews, the Committee meets to discuss the interview, and to make a selection.

B. Technical Proposals And Interviews (Procedures)

The Request for Technical Proposal (RFP) along with interviews may be used for solicitation purposes. In the proposal, the consultants must demonstrate their ability to perform a specific project. The RFP is

distributed to pre-qualified consultants with the necessary expertise. The RFP will contain technical and desired criteria for performance of the work to be done, and the consultant will be encouraged to visit the project site and obtain project specifics. Typical rating criteria are:

- Company Experience in the Area of Work
- Scope of Work
- Critical Path Diagram
- Milestones
- Availability of Manpower
- Location of Work
- Project Manager
- Key Personnel
- Sub consultants
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) utilization commitment.

In addition, the RFP should address weighting factors, deadline for returning the RFP, and the number of copies of the RFP to submit.

Proposal Review

When the RFPs are received by the CAU, a copy will be distributed to the Selection Committee members for review and rating. The Committee then meets to evaluate the ratings. Each proposal is reviewed and discussed. The Chairman builds a consensus among the Committee to recommend a consultant selection or to short-list for interviews.

The evaluation rating sheets are finalized, signed by the Committee members, and tallied. Draft ratings are often revised after thorough consideration and discussion by the Committee. The evaluation rating sheets should show the crossed-out draft data and the entry of the new rating, thus leaving an audit trail.

Interviews

Interviews allow the Department a first hand opportunity to ascertain the consultant's ability to perform a specific project. The interview format should be approximately one hour long, with the first thirty minutes for consultant presentations and the second thirty minutes for questions and answers. Scheduling an extra twenty to thirty minutes between interviews allows adequate time for set up of the next consultant firm. Other formats can be used, but should be coordinated with the CAU.

To maintain consistency of information prior to the interview, the Committee Chairman should be the only Department contact for the short-listed consultants. The Chairman cannot divulge information from other firms, but should let the firms know any information the Department has of record that is pertinent to the project. On a case-by-case basis, the Chairman may direct the consultant to other committee members or Department employees who possess expertise appropriate to the project.

During the interviews, the same set of questions is used for each Consultant, and the Committee members rate each consultant. After the interviews, the Committee meets to discuss the interview, and to make a selection.

C. Technical Proposals Only (Procedures)

The Technical Proposal (RFP) alone may be used for solicitation purposes. In the proposal, the consultants must demonstrate their ability to perform a specific project. The RFP is distributed to pre-qualified consultants with the necessary expertise. The RFP will contain technical and desired criteria for

performance of the work to be done, and the consultant will be encouraged to visit the project site and obtain project specifics. Typical rating criteria are:

- Company Experience in the Area of Work
- Scope of Work
- Critical Path Diagram
- Milestones
- Availability of Manpower
- Location of Work
- Project Manager
- Key Personnel
- Sub consultants
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) utilization commitment.

In addition, the RFP should address weighting factors, deadline for returning the RFP, and the number of copies of the RFP to submit.

Proposal Review

When the RFPs are received by the CAU, a copy will be distributed to the Selection Committee members for review and rating. The Committee then meets to evaluate the ratings. Each proposal is reviewed and discussed. The Chairman builds a consensus among the Committee to recommend a consultant selection.

The evaluation rating sheets are finalized, signed by the Committee members, and tallied. Draft ratings are often revised after thorough consideration and discussion by the Committee. The evaluation rating sheets should show the crossed-out draft data and the entry of the new rating, thus leaving an audit trail.

Post-Solicitation Procedures

Selection

The Selection Committee recommends a consultant selection, and the Assistant Chief Engineer – Development makes the final approval.

Once the consultant is selected, the CAU notifies the successful and unsuccessful firm(s) via mail.

Debriefing

Because the Department uses a qualification-based selection criteria calling for proposals and sometimes interviews, the consultants incur a fair amount of time and cost that is not directly reimbursed. As a professional courtesy, the Department should provide candid debriefings.

These debriefings not only benefit the consultants, but also the Department. Consultants can adjust their future operations to better serve the Department. A debriefing can be held any time after the consultant short list or selection has been made.

The selected firm's proposal is available for review after the agreement is executed with that firm.